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SETTLEMENT OF THE CLASS ACTION REGARDING FUEL TAX PAID BY INDIANS ON RESERVE IN QUÉBEC

PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY AS IT MAY AFFECT YOUR RIGHTS

NOTICE OF A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

The Plaintiff, Ghislain Picard, and the Agence du Revenu du Québec have negotiated an agreement to settle this class action. The agreement will be submitted to the Court for approval on November 29, 2011. This notice summarizes the important points of the settlement.

WHO IS AFFECTED BY THE CLASS ACTION?

- All Indians within the meaning of the *Indian Act* who are registered in the Indian Register, except for Cree beneficiaries of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement;
- who have paid the tax collected pursuant to the *Fuel Tax Act* since its coming into force on July 1, 1973;
- for a purchase of gasoline or diesel on an Indian reserve, within the meaning of the *Indian Act*, located in Quebec, or on Cree or Naskapi Category IA or IA-N land within the meaning of the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*.

All affected Indians became group members automatically if they did not ask to be excluded in 2007.

WHAT IS THE CASE ABOUT?

The fuel tax imposed by Quebec

Since 1973, retailers situated on reserve have had to collect the fuel tax from all customers who buy gasoline or diesel. Since 1987, registered (“status”) Indians could obtain a refund if they applied using the form and within the time-period required by Québec.

Mr. Picard opposed the application of the fuel tax

to purchases made by Indians on reserve. In addition he opposed the refund mechanism established in 1987.

Since July 1, 2011, registered Indians who have a registration card (“attestation d’inscription”) issued by the Agence du Revenu du Québec may buy fuel on reserve without paying the tax if they buy it from a retailer participating in the new mechanism.

The Class action authorized by the Court

In 2007, the Superior Court authorized Mr. Ghislain Picard to bring a class action on behalf of all members of the group seeking:

- a declaration that the *Fuel Tax Act* violates the tax exemption provided for in the *Indian Act* and the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act* and which take precedence over all provincial legislation;
- restitution of the tax to registered Indians who have paid it since 1973 without applying for a refund;
- damages for trouble and inconvenience suffered by those who obtained a refund, on the grounds the system that they complied with was illegal.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES PROVIDED BY THE AGREEMENT?

Compensation

The settlement agreement provides for the creation of a fund of:

- \$24.3 million to be distributed on an individual basis;
- \$2.7 million to be provided to the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL) for the benefit of its members.

The agreement covers the period ending June 30, 2011.



Compensation will be paid to registered Indians residing in Quebec or Akwesasne without their having to prove that they bought gasoline or fuel oil on an Indian reserve or on Cree or Naskapi land and without having to prove that they paid the fuel tax. Compensation will be paid according to their age at the date they file a claim and based on the following criteria:

- a basic amount for those between the ages of 18 and 24;
- double the basic amount for those between the ages of 25 and 34;
- triple the basic amount for those between the ages of 35 and 44;
- four times the basic amount for those between the ages of 45 and 54;
- five times the basic amount for those between the ages of 55 and 64;
- six times the basic amount for those 65 years and older.

Compensation will be paid according to the same criteria but at a reduced rate for members of Quebec bands who reside elsewhere.

Registered Indians who reside elsewhere but are not members of a Québec band must prove that they paid the tax. They will share a total maximum amount of \$ 300,000 and will each receive a maximum individual compensation of \$50.

Claims

If the settlement agreement is approved, each Indian who wishes to receive compensation will have to file a claim with the settlement administrator within the year following the publication of the final notice of settlement by using a form to be determined. The claimant will have to provide certain supporting documents confirming their Indian status, date of birth and place of residence. The amount that individuals will receive depends on the number of claimants. You may make a claim after approval of the agreement. Further notices will be published.

IF YOU OBJECT

A hearing will be held in Superior Court on **November 29, 2011, at 9:30 AM in room 3.21 of the Quebec City Courthouse located at 300 Jean-Lesage Boulevard in Quebec City, G1K 8K6** concerning approval of the settlement agreement, various orders provided for in the agreement, the selection of a settlement administrator and the adjudication of other related issues.

As a group member, you have the right to make representations at this hearing. If you prefer, you may submit your representations in writing to the address indicated above before **November 25, 2011**, to the attention of Justice Jean Lemelin, or by fax to 418-528-9883 or by email to sonia.levasseur@judex.qc.ca.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The present notice is only a summary of the settlement agreement. Group members may consult the whole agreement at the following website: www.apnql-afnql.ca. The settlement agreement can also be consulted at the office of the Superior Court, District of Quebec, at 300 Jean-Lesage Boulevard in Quebec City, G1K 8K6.

If you have questions or if you wish to obtain a copy of the settlement agreement, please contact legal counsel for the Plaintiff:

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Still no apology?

By Will Nicholls

Wow, we did a news brief last issue in which Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan said residential schools weren't really genocide. Duncan instead felt "the history of residential schools tells of an education policy gone wrong."

This was done during an announcement that a stained-glass artwork in honour of residential school survivors would be installed on Parliament Hill to make matters even more of an insult.

Obviously, like most of Canada, Duncan hasn't really been educated on the past government's history and what genocide really means. So step-by-step let's look at what according to the international meaning of genocide is and how it applies to Canada's treatment of Aboriginal Peoples.

Though you only have to satisfy one of the requirements, Canada has covered them all.

The first provision is killing members of a specific group. For instance, the scalping laws that encouraged settlers to kill and scalp Indians for a monetary reward were part of Nova Scotia's past. It applies to the deliberate contaminating of Aboriginal children with infectious diseases in residential schools, which led to their deaths. Include this with deliberate abuse, torture, starvation and denial of medical care for residential school children that resulted in almost 40% dying and it's a no-brainer.

The second provision concerns causing serious bodily or mental harm to the members of the group. A prime example is the torture and abuse inflicted on children in residential schools. It includes sexual abuse, rape, sodomy, solitary confinement, denial of food and medical care, punishment for

speaking one's language and more. Parents experienced mental harm too when their children were forcibly removed from them. The loss of language, culture, traditions, practices, way of life, beliefs and customs plays a part in so many social problems.

The third part is to deliberately inflict on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part. Housing crises come to mind as well as problems with potable water. Often bands were removed from productive land to barren or swampy areas. If any Aboriginal left their assigned territory they were disenfranchised giving up claim to the group. If a woman married outside the group, she lost all her rights and status.

Another part of genocide was to prevent births within the group. Doctors sterilized Aboriginal women without their knowledge or consent in Canada.

Then there's forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. The infamous 1960s scoop took Aboriginal children from their people and had them adopted by non-Aboriginal Canadians. Today, there is an alarming number of children removed from their families. It's even higher than all the past actions combined.

I hope this educates Minister Duncan and others on the difference between an educational policy gone wrong and the Geneva Convention definition of genocide and how it applies to Canada's Aboriginal population. And, yes, an apology would be appreciated if you plan to continue as a Minister of Indian Affairs who will be respected by Canada's Aboriginal Peoples.

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photo by:
Daniel Coyle

Life less and strife less

By Sonny Orr



Once, many years ago, it was quite easy to get a driver's permit. Back in the day, the local constable advised me to go and get a money order for \$40 and send it out. I complied and wondered when the driving school would start, who the instructor would be and all that other stuff. Weeks went by and so did my fantasies of taking driver's education classes. Having a driver's permit was fast becoming another dream that wouldn't come true.

Two months passed, and then some official-looking envelope appeared in the mailbox. Inside was a green piece of paper that had my name on it and it allowed me to drive anywhere in the territory. Bring on the Chevy Camaro please because I'm going for a ride. However, soon that dream was dispersed by the fact that I didn't have anything to drive.

The dream of owning a vehicle and driving around like the Dukes of Hazzard didn't really matter, because we didn't have any roads and couldn't really leave town because we were on an island. The only way out was during the winter on the ice bridge and that often meant driving for quite a ways before reaching anything that resembled a road or highway.

So, we had to resort to digging our way out of every little sandpit in just about everyone's driveway, and then, anything off road was a real serious venture, because that was real off-roading. It was like off-roading to the nth degree, where the basic rules were to try not get stuck and if you do, you can only use a shovel to get out.

Ah, the glory days of simplicity and the personal vehicle. Some vehicles just got passed around until they died of natural causes. They made them tough in those days, not like today, where a blinking light will set you back days and thousands of dollars in inspections and evaluations, to find out that it was the light that was faulty and then, the bank would take it back stat-

ing negligence and abuse of the warranty and broken lease conditions because someone decided to scratch your paint just out of spite.

Back in the day, dents were harder to make and anyone with a pipe wrench could repair anything with a few bangs and ear-wrenching squeaks when wrung around a muffler. In those days, if you didn't have a muffler, it was okay and the flames shooting out the exhaust made it even more fun at night.

Today, it's a little harder to get a vehicle and send it north, where there are no road network connections and you cannot get insurance for a personal vehicle. Only businesses and commercial enterprises can get insurance for their business vehicles and if you are someone who comes from the north, it is yet another blow to what can be accessible for the average individual, who already has the burden of carrying the high costs of living and too boot, cannot be insured for any vehicle. Looks like big business wins again.

No one will be able to drive their own vehicle and have the safety net of insurance to cover them. But how do others do it? Good question, they don't come from the north and have addresses in the south. So, in the future, don't expect much out of exploring our own backyard safely, because there is no coverage for Northerners.

However, the couple on a Mexican vacation, the guy on patrol in Afghanistan, the passengers on the aircraft, the sightseers in Turkey and the sunbather in Phuket are all insured. But, in the quiet North, it is yet another strange story where in our own nation, the people of the North are just too much of a risk to insure. The only way to get by is to live a life without strife or worry and maybe you won't get hit by someone in an uninsured vehicle.

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An equal partner

Oujé-Bougoumou finally recognized by the JBNQA

By Akiva Levitas

news

History was made on November 7 in Oujé-Bougoumou's Albert Mianscum Memorial Sports Complex where representatives from Canada, Quebec and Eeyou Istchee gathered to sign an amendment to the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) officially recognizing Oujé-Bougoumou as the ninth Cree community.

After having been displaced many times, the community of Oujé-Bougoumou has finally closed this chapter in their history and can now move forward. They had negotiated previous settlements with the governments of Quebec and Canada in 1989 and 1992 respectively which got them the funding to construct their new location but the issue of their status wasn't resolved until now.

This moment came as a bittersweet victory for Oujé-Bougoumou. Chief Reggie Neeposh, who has worked for this for 27 years, said, "It is somewhat sad that some of our Elders who started this are not here to witness it, but at the same time we're happy that it finally happened." He expressed gratitude towards the Quebec government for its efforts to work out this agreement.

The ceremonies began at the cultural centre in Oujé-Bougoumou where the three delegations met to discuss the event behind closed doors and finalize all the details. The delegates from the governments of Canada and Quebec were then given a tour of the beautifully designed community and all of its facilities.

The signing ceremony took place in the Albert Mianscum Memorial Sports Complex in front of a jubilant crowd of young and old gathered to witness this historic moment. The event began with an opening prayer conducted by former Chief and Elder Sam Bosum along with a traditional song of thanksgiving by Joshua Iserhoff.

Then one-by-one the officials spoke to the community about the agreement. First was Neeposh, who was followed

by Pierre Corbeil, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, who is also responsible for Northern Quebec.

Minister responsible for Native Affairs Geoffrey Kelly followed and stated, "I am proud to witness this moment in Oujé-Bougoumou today." Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development John Duncan spoke afterwards about all of the hard work and progress that had been accomplished. The last two speakers were Grand Chief Mathew Coon Come and Premier Jean Charest.

With Charest in attendance, Coon Come, along with Neeposh and Deputy Grand Chief Ashley Iserhoff, signed the Complementary Agreement No. 22 as did Kelley and Duncan.

Charest highlighted the fact that the JBNQA is not a "static document frozen in time" and that it will be amended if there are more injustices that need to be corrected. "More than ever, the concept of mutual respect is a vital component of our relations with the Cree Nation," he said.

This moment has been in the making for more than 50 years and addresses the community's years of suffering and neglect by the government. The settlement will provide a full description of the land which will form the Oujé-Bougoumou First Nation along the lines of the JBNQA as well as all the benefits that come with recognition, such as housing and development.

Coon Come spoke of the importance of the agreement. "Today represents the culmination of our long efforts to redress an injustice and to finally make right what the community of Oujé-Bougoumou should never have experienced."

After signing, there was the customary gift-exchange ceremony. A funny moment came when Charest was waiting



for his present thinking it would be snowshoes like the other minister got. But when he was told to take off his jacket, he smiled nervously making the crowd laugh as he put on a new leather vest.

It will also end the lawsuits brought by the Oujé-Bougoumou Cree before La Paix des Braves treaty with a \$20 million settlement and enable the Assinica National Park to be created and protected.

Duncan said the federal government has been on a path of reconciliation with its "getting business done agenda" with the First Nations of Canada. "We have settled a lot of agreements, starting with the apology for the mistreatment in residential schools and there has been great progress made across the country."

The Complementary Agreement will transfer 100 square kilometres of land from Quebec to Oujé-Bougoumou as well as 67 square kilometres of land will be added to the community for growth.

This agreement is a testament to the positive outcomes of cooperation between the Native, federal and provincial leaders in Canada. Neeposh summed it up best when he said, "After many years of hard work the dreams of our Elders have finally been realized." The next generation of Oujé-Bougoumou will now always remember November 7 as a defining day for the rest of their lives.



"We wish to congratulate the community of Ouje-Bougoumou and the Grand Council of the Crees for concluding a complementary agreement to the JBNQA which brings Ouje-Bougoumou into the JBNQA."

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Pre-development splendour

The Crees of Waswanipi sign a pre-development deal with GéoMégA

By Amy German

The community of Waswanipi, the Grand Council of the Crees and GéoMégA Resources gathered the media at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Montreal on October 20 to announce and sign an exclusive pre-development deal for a rare-earths mining project.

According to GéoMégA, the discovery of Total Rare Earths Oxides (TREO) at the Montviel site is the third largest outside of China in the world. In that these rare-earth oxides are essential to the development of clean technologies for the 21st century, they will have a significant value in the market place.

But, this deal is significant not just about what the rare-earth oxides will do for clean energy as the Waswanipi community is quite excited about what the development of the project will be able to do for the people while at the same time working the land in a way that is acceptable to the Crees.

"Our community and the Council of the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi are eager to collaborate with the mineral exploration and mining industry. We recognize that this industry has a corporate social responsibility to follow in the footsteps of GéoMégA. The signing of this agreement ensures that there will be meaningful participation by our local members without sacrificing sustainability. It is an important step for all parties," said Waswanipi Chief Paul Gull.

Gull went on to state that the community is quite eager to create wealth for the Cree people and their partners, but they would not be willing to do it at the expense of sustainability.

"All the parties must mutually recognize the partnerships that have been created by respecting the environment and sustainable management," Gull said.

Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come was present at the deal signing on behalf of the Grand Council of the Crees/Cree Regional Authority.

Reflecting on the long way Crees have come since development began in Eeyou Istchee decades ago, Coon Come expressed his delight at how business deals like this one show that there is no longer an "us vs. them" divide between Crees and developers.

Once more, Coon Come praised the deal because it recognized the Cree Mining Policies that have been laid out by the Grand Council on behalf of all Crees so that sustainable development and the sharing of benefits are at the forefront of this partnership. And so, a project where respect for the land and the people involves the consent of the tallymen and also offers strong economic possibilities for Natives and non-Natives in the region is what has come out of this carefully negotiated predevelopment deal, pleasing everyone.

"What I like about this agreement is that it goes beyond the letters of intent

and memorandums of understanding and goes directly to a pre-development framework. That in itself sends signals to the mining proponents within the region that we continue to respect the rights that are provided for in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and respects the Paix des Braves principals of where the government is supposed to encourage employment opportunities and joint ventures and the building of relationships.

"A pre-development agreement is the basis to build upon and of course in the future we are well aware that this proponent and its partners are still subject to a rigorous Environmental Impact Assessment and that is the correct way to do it. It makes it a lot easier when you are working together and you are working partners and when you are involved with the tallymen who are directly affected," said Coon Come.

As it is very early on for this project, according to Simon Britt, President and Chief Executive Officer of GéoMégA, it will be some time before the Montviel site sees a production phase. For the time being the Environmental Impact Assessments as well as other studies will be the project's focus.

The Crees will also have an opportunity to be part of this process.

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Innu outraged by ADQ leadership comments

The Innu of the Ekuanitshit First Nation in Mingan, Quebec, are outraged and seeking an apology from the Action démocratique du Québec leadership after disparaging remarks were made about the Innu group in conjunction with the ADQ's objection to payments being made to band members.

The money in question is \$2.4 million that was paid to 500 band members from a \$75 million settlement payment by Hydro-Québec in 2009 over ancestral rights regarding the La Romaine hydroelectric project.

ADQ leader Gérard Deltell and ADQ MNA François Bonnardel stated publicly that direct payments to band members would end badly.

Bonnardel said the payouts would be "immoral" because almost half of the band members have alcohol and drug problems. He went on to say that Quebec would be paying out twice and so it would be "crazy" if the money would go directly to the people and so the province has a responsibility to "help" these people in that respect. His justification was that Quebec would have to pay out a second time to get these people back on track after giving them cash payouts.

While representatives from the Innu community and the province of Quebec have demanded a public apology, two days after the remarks were

made the ADQ was still unreachable for comment.

State of emergency declared in Attawapiskat

The housing crisis in Attawapiskat, Ontario on the western coast of James Bay, has reached such epic proportions that a state of emergency has been declared.

As the snow has begun to settle in the Cree community of about 2000, hundreds of band members are living in Third-World-like accommodations with little or no protection from the elements, let alone plumbing.

As Charlie Angus, NDP MP for Timmins-James Bay, made his way to the fly-in-only community on November 7, he emailed the *Nation* a brief description of what he saw firsthand:

"The community has hundreds of homeless people. More than 90 are living in one temporary trailer unit that has only six washrooms. We have families living in tents, sheds and makeshift cabins. Many people have no access to running water or toilets. They are relying on buckets that are dumped in the ditches in front of the homes."

According to the CBC, an Attawapiskat community doctor has stated that the intense overcrowding in the available shelters is causing a number of health problems for the residents.

Dr. John Waddell told the CBC on November 10 that not only are people in Attawapiskat getting lice, scabies and impetigo as a result of the overcrowding issue, but viral infections are rampant.

At press time, the federal government and Ontario had yet to comment or announce any strategy to address Attawapiskat's latest crisis.

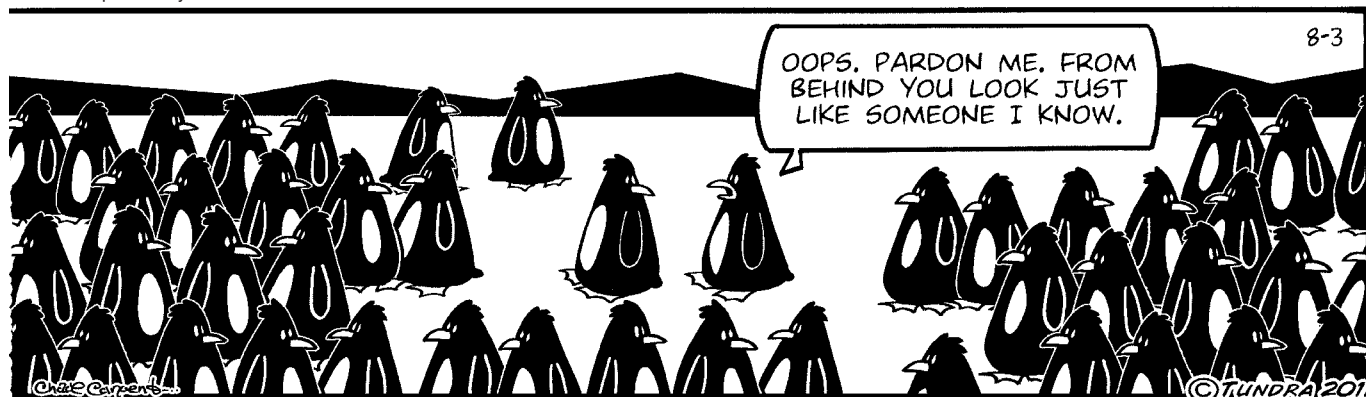
Award for *Nation* writer

Nation reporter Akiva Levitas won the 2011-2012 Don McGillivray Memorial Prize in Explanatory Journalism from Concordia University for his article "Everything's changing" which appeared in the September 23, 2011 issue of the *Nation* (Vol. 18, No. 23).



On behalf of everyone at the *Nation*, "Congratulations, Akiva!" Levitas, who is studying journalism at Concordia, said, "Thanks everyone for the congrats. This wouldn't have been possible without all the opportunities I was given by *the Nation* as well as Martin [Siberok] who got me the internship in the first place."

Comic strip courtesy of Tundra Comics: www.tundracomics.com



Making an impact

Former NHL player and coach John Chabot returns to the north to rekindle his hockey passion

By Daniel Coyle

feature

Quebec hockey fans may best remember John Chabot as a young centre for the Montreal Canadiens. Indeed, Chabot has enjoyed a hockey career as an NHL player and coach that can be considered successful by any standard.

Today, Chabot is still deeply involved in the game, but not behind the bench of an NHL squad. Since giving up his post as Assistant Coach of the New York Islanders, where he worked with the legendary Ted Nolan, Chabot has turned his focus and considerable understanding of hockey, coaching and mentoring toward helping develop young hockey players and coaches in First Nations communities across Canada.

Working with Right To Play (www.RightToPlay.ca), an international organization committed to improving the lives of children by using the power of sport and play for development, health and peace, Chabot is actively involved in developing and delivering hockey skills and coaching clinics as part of Right To Play's First Nations Program.

"Right To Play is an organization that has tried to set up a legacy after every Olympics that is held," explains Chabot. "In Canada, with the Olympics last year, they set up programs with First Nations communities in northern Ontario – programs for implementing values, leadership and self-worth through after-school programs. They use education as a tool to keep kids out of trouble, and they bring me up to run hockey programs a few times each year with coaching clinics attached."

However, had it not been for a couple of timely phone calls, Chabot may have never developed the coaching experience that he now possesses and shares with young aspiring coaches.

Chabot, an Algonquin from Kitigan Zibi, was born in PEI but attended high school in Hull, Quebec and currently calls Ottawa home. Hockey has been a part of his life since he was very young. In fact, his first success came early, when he was drafted first overall in the 1979 QMJHL Draft by the Hull Olympiques. He was later named QMJHL MVP and Player of the Year in 1981-82, a season during which he racked up 143 points and led the Sherbrooke Castors to a QMJHL Championship and berth in the Memorial Cup. The Castors were eventually defeated in the Memorial Cup Final by a Kitchener Rangers team that included future NHL stars like Scott Stevens, Al MacInnis and Brian Bellows.

After being drafted in the 2nd round of the 1980 NHL Entry Draft by the Canadiens, Chabot went on to play over 500 games in the NHL with the Habs, Pittsburgh Penguins and Detroit Red Wings before continuing his pro-hockey career in Europe with teams in Germany, Switzerland and Italy, as well as two brief stints with Canada's national team.

While it was not part of Chabot's plan, he quickly joined the coaching ranks upon returning from Europe at

the end of his playing career. "I left Germany in 2001 and did not know what I was going to do. I let some signs come about before deciding what to do. I got a call from Charlie Henry on December 23 of that year asking me if I was interested in coaching his hockey team, the (QMJHL) Hull Olympiques. And I said I am interested, but I have never coached before. I hadn't even thought of coaching."

Within days of that conversation, Chabot was behind the Olympiques' bench working alongside Benoit Groulx. His return to the team where he broke into Junior hockey lasted two years before Chabot decided that it wasn't what he really wanted. But while his days in Gatineau appeared over, his time behind the bench was not.

"I started to do more trips up north, but when I was in (Gatineau) I still spent time with the team," recalls Chabot.

"And then, I was in NWT and I got a call asking whether I was interested in being a head coach with the Acadie-Bathurst Titan. I said 'sure'. I thought at the time, maybe I'd try to get back into the NHL as a coach or an assistant coach. Then I spent two years as an assistant with the New York Islanders and my contract was not renewed, and that was fine with me."

Having achieved his goal of making it back to the NHL, the time had come for Chabot to refocus on what he felt had become his real passion.

"Like with anything, to be a successful coach you have got to have a passion," says Chabot. "As a coach I did not have that, not like when I was playing. Coaching is not what I want to do full time. This is that I want to do. I want to work with Right To Play, I want to work with kids in the north, and one of the things I am trying to do now is mentor coaches year round. I work with the kids, but I



also work with the coaches on practice presentation, game preparation and the other key parts of coaching.”

Right To Play first initiated the PLAY (Promoting Life Skills in Aboriginal Youth) Program in partnership with Sandy Lake First Nation and Moose Cree First Nation. The PLAY Program aims to limit the challenges and build on the strengths of Aboriginal youth and their communities, while supporting the value of culture and identity. A key component of the program is the promotion of youth engagement through leadership activities, volunteer work and relationship building with other members of the community.

Part of the PLAY Program, Hockey for Development takes a five-pronged approach to teaching life skills through hockey, including the Coach Certification and On-Ice Hockey Clinic Components that Chabot is deeply involved in.

The Coach Certification Component aims to support coaches and referees to meet the following objectives:

- Gain a general understanding of how Right To Play activities can be integrated in hockey sessions and future practices
- Identify healthy attitudes, skills or information that children can acquire with Right To Play activities
- Become certified by Hockey Canada



- Be enabled to use hockey-coaching skills outside of their community (for example, in the Little Bands Youth Hockey Tournament).

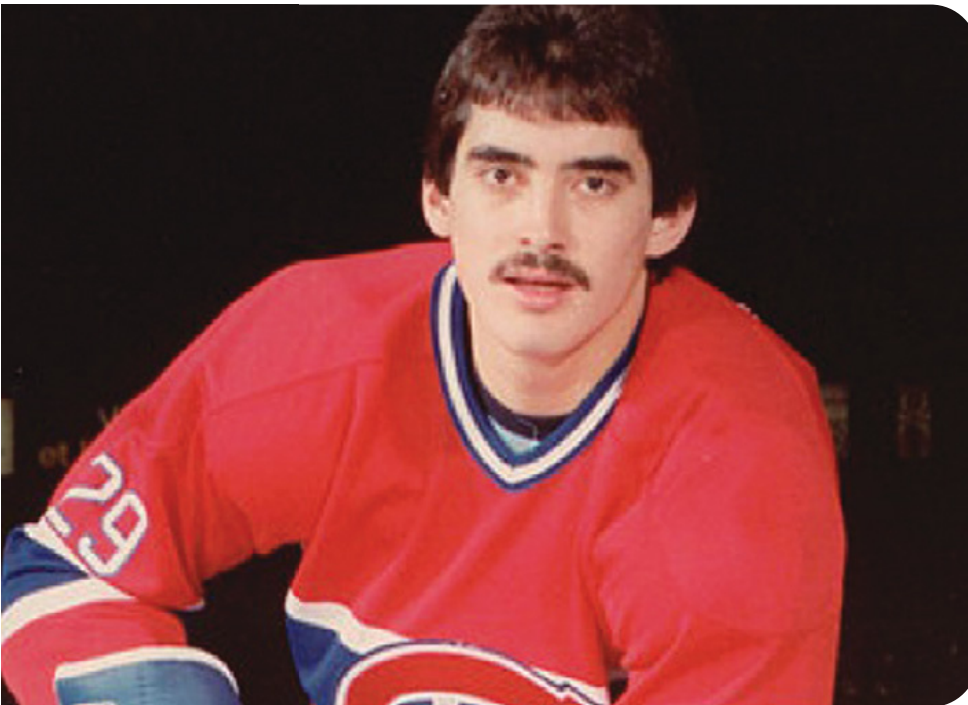
The On-Ice Hockey Clinic Component, led by John Chabot with support from a team of Hockey Canada-certified coaches and Right To Play staff, provides children, youth and adults with hockey skills regardless of their previous experience. This leg of the program aims to coach children and youth in a variety of lessons ranging from skating and stick-handling to shooting and passing. The clinic culminates in a friendly one-hour game. The objectives of this part of the program for children and youth include:

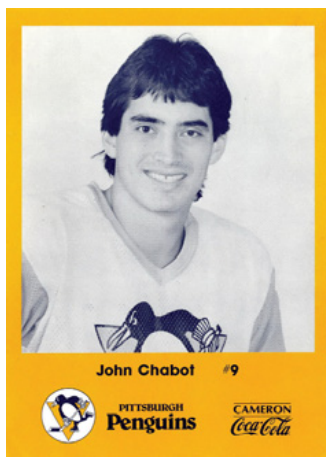
- Strengthening hockey skills in the areas of skating, passing, shooting and stick-handling in an enjoyable and safe environment
- Learning new drills that teach players how to work as partners and in teams
- Developing new friendships and relationships with peers
- Having an enjoyable and lasting experience

Adam Fiddler, Sandy Lake First Nation Chief, sees positive results coming from the PLAY Program. “This is a tremendous opportunity for the young people of Sandy Lake. It’s very exciting to see the young boys and girls of the community have the opportunity to be able to get on the ice, to have new equipment, to be able to skate, to have coaching, and to be able to have encouraging parents,” Fiddler stated in a recent report.

“It’s a tremendous opportunity not just on the ice, but it gives them skills for their daily lives. It gives them life skills, and that is what this is all about. It’s not just about winning hockey games, but it is about learning skills that they don’t even know that they’re learning. They will use these skills to become positive, contributing members of our community, and that is what leads to a better community.”

For Chabot, a big part of part of working with young coaches is not just helping them achieve Hockey Canada certification. It has more to do with developing sustainable programs in small communities and eliminating negative perceptions and intimidation that new coaches often feel.





"I think the biggest misconception from people in the north is that coaching is hard; that you have to have all these diplomas from Hockey Canada, that you had to have played the game," continues Chabot.

"It helps to have played, but just being there is the most important thing. And you will learn. Every coach has to start somewhere. It

does not have to be intimidating. You have to take the intimidation factor out and some of the courses and camps can do that," he said.

"We are going up to Moose Cree to set up a coaching clinic like we did last year. We will go up and implement what was taught on the ice, and try to extend it over the winter. And then go back later in the winter and continue that process, so when we leave when our four-year mandate is up, that the community has qualified coaches who are not intimidated and not afraid to tell players, 'yeah, we are going to play games today but we are going to practice for 40 minutes and play for 15' or whatever the case,'" explains Chabot.

"Cuz coaching isn't hard. It is just how you present yourself and present your practice.

Anybody can coach, but coaches that have the right frame-of-mind and work very hard at it will be successful."

The hockey world is not the only place where Chabot has not been intimidated. He also owns Anishinabeg Communications (www.thepeoplefirst.com), an Ottawa-based company that specializes in providing a variety of business services to First Nations communities and businesses.

"Anishinabeg is all about helping to procure government contracts, First Nations contracts, and private contracts. I enjoy it because it is a different aspect that I was never involved with before. It's fun meeting people and pushing what we have. It is along the line of what other races do, where they support each other. Just because a white company can do something, why not give it to an

Indian group that does the same thing. Why don't we help each other?"

"We do a lot of backstabbing in our communities," says Chabot directly. "There are people trying to make themselves a name off the reserve and they are put down instead of being supported and pushed up. And I think the more people we have pushing up, the more successful we are off-reserve, then the more successful we will be on-reserve."

Then he adds, "Just because we are a First Nations company, doesn't mean we are a second-rate company. We are as good as anybody."

Whether he is on the ice, behind the bench or in the boardroom, Chabot is having an impact, and it is First Nations communities that are seeing the benefit.

Puck fun

Hockey tournaments in Quebec and Ontario bring Native communities together

By Daniel Coyle

The hockey season is now in full swing. And there are no better indicators of that than the recent announcements of upcoming Aboriginal hockey tournaments in Ontario and Quebec.

The Annual CREE Senior Hockey and Broomball Tournament is back for its 31st year. Scheduled to take place from Thursday December 8 to Sunday December 11 at the Air Creebec Centre in Val-d'Or, the tournament is organized by Cree Regional Events & Entertainment and Cree Nation Recreation Directors.

Over 60 men's and women's teams are expected to compete for over \$75,000 in prize money.

Teams will participate in the following categories:

- CLASS "A" HOCKEY (10 TEAMS)
- CLASS "B1" HOCKEY (10 TEAMS)
- CLASS "B2" HOCKEY (10 TEAMS)
- OLD TIMERS HOCKEY 40+ (10 TEAMS)
- WOMENS' HOCKEY (8 TEAMS)
- WOMEN'S BROOMBALL (12 TEAMS)
- WOMEN'S RECREATIONAL BROOMBALL 30+ (6 TEAMS)

Charles Hester, Recreation Director in Waskaganish, has been involved in organizing this tournament since 2004, in addition to a number of hockey camps and other activities in Waskaganish and other communities.

According to Hester, "We have a lot of negative influences in our communities, like drugs and alcohol. Hockey keeps our kids focused on what's important and provides a possible way out if they work hard enough."

The tournament has also become an important part of the local economy in Val-d'Or as fans and players alike flock to the town, filling hotels, enjoying local restaurants and perhaps doing a little Christmas shopping.

More information on the tournament is available on Facebook. Just do a search on "31st Annual CREE Senior Hockey and



2010-CREE Sr Hockey Class A Champions - Moose Factory Scrappers

Broomball Tournament" to visit the tournament's event page.

The 31st Annual CREE Senior Hockey and Broomball Tournament is not the only big tournament happening that weekend. The 1st Annual Aboriginal Men's Hockey Tournament is also being held December 8-11 at the Tim Horton Event Centre in Cochrane, Ontario.

The brainchild of Christopher Hunter, Recreation Director for the Taykwa Tagamou First Nation, the objective of this tournament is to bring together people from Native communities across Ontario and Quebec as well as raise funds for Recreation Department projects in the Taykwa Tagamou First Nation.

"Taykwa Tagamou Nation Recreation's ultimate goal is to raise funds for its recreational programs and leisure activities," said Hunter, while announcing the tournament. "With this acquired funding through this sporting event, TTN Recreation will also be able to sponsor its band members to pursue their athletic ambitions, whichever recreation or sport they choose."

The Aboriginal Men's Hockey Tournament will feature 12 teams vying for \$20,000 in prize money. Team entry

fee is \$2000 and each participating team is guaranteed to play four games.

The tournament will feature a Monster Bingo on December 8, with over \$24,000 in cash prizes to be won. The tournament will also host a concert featuring live music and a DJ on December 10. Both the Monster Bingo and concert will take place at the Tim Horton Event Centre.

"This hockey tournament is in its first year and we, the Taykwa Tagamou Nation, hope it becomes an annual event," said Hunter.

"It has taken over five years to envision, draft, blueprint, map out, and materialize this hockey tournament. To construct an event at this magnitude requires a lot of networking with other businesses and potential sponsors. One of the unique features of this tournament is adding the monster bingo to the event. I welcome everyone to come to this event."

For more info on the 1st Annual Aboriginal Men's Tournament contact:

Christopher Hunter
705-272-4054 phone
705-272-5785 fax
pimatisiwin@hotmail.com

Determination pays off

Wemindji's Sara Morrison brings her A-Game to the University of Ottawa

By Daniel Coyle



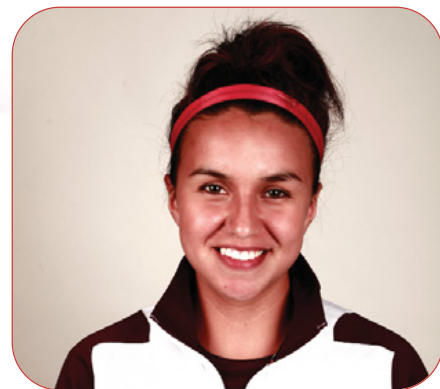
Sports have long provided a way for young people to get an education. Many teenagers have left their homes in Cree communities so that they can participate in their sport of choice at the highest level possible. As elite athletes, they can take advantage of Sport-Études and scholarship programs that give them the best chance at a high-quality education.

Wemindji's Sara Morrison has turned that process on its head; leaving home at a young age to pursue school and becoming an elite-level hockey player in the process.

After studying and playing hockey last year at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia, where she was among the league's leading scorers and was named Rookie of the Year, 19-year-old Morrison recently transferred to

University of Ottawa. In addition to studying Human Kinetics, Morrison is a physical force on the university's Women's Hockey team, competing against some of the best female players in Canada. But it was not hockey that motivated her parents to send Morrison to school in places like North Bay, Sudbury and Ottawa. It has always been about providing their daughter with the education she needs to be successful.

"I moved from Wemindji because of school," said Morrison, who took time to speak with the Nation in between a morning hockey practice and afternoon classes. "My parents always emphasized 'school first'. It will be beneficial for me and the community back home. But I like school, and hockey just kind of happened at the same time."



Sara Morrison

Like most kids, Morrison was introduced to hockey at a very young age. She learned how to skate at 3, and started playing hockey at 4, later joining boys' teams in Wemindji until her move to North Bay after graduating from Grade 6.

"I moved with my dad, who was going to school to become a pilot and it was just me and him for a year," explains Morrison. "Moving down south was big change and I was excited. I went to school in North Bay for Grades 7 and 8 and played house league the first year."

That was my challenge. Every time I moved to a new city, because the hockey association didn't know you, you were judged and put into a lower level even if you were as good as the players in A or AA."

But hockey was not the biggest challenge Morrison faced in North Bay. In addition to challenges in the classroom and on the ice, young Morrison had to endure time away from family.

"In Grade 8, I lived with my aunt and uncle for half a year, and half a year with a teacher. Grade 8 was my hardest because I was alone. But my parents came to visit all the time."

After Grade 8, Morrison returned to Wemindji for a year before again leaving for Sudbury. By the time she reached Grade 12, her decision about what to do next had as much to do with hockey as it did with studies.

"After Grade 12, I wasn't thinking about university and wasn't sure how to go about working at the university level. I came out of high school a year earlier than everyone else. So I took a year off, moved back home and worked in the Sports Academy program run by the Wemindji Recreation Department."

The Sports Academy program uses sports to motivate kids to stay in school. Morrison's track record, both on the ice and in the classroom, meant that she had a lot of credibility with the youngsters she worked with.

Morrison also spent that year playing hockey, captaining the Wemindji Paint Hills Midget A boys' squad to the Coastal Championship and a second place finish at the Regionals in Abitibi-Témiscamingue, just shy of a berth in the provincial championships.

Upon making the decision to return to school, Morrison attended a hockey prospects camp in Toronto with the expectation that she would be attending University of Ottawa. But a meeting with Paul Bloomfield, coach of the Liberty University Flames hockey club, would change her mind.

"I was excited at the time. It was the States and I was on my own. I knew it would be a new experience," explains Morrison. "But I struggled that year being that far from home.



Coach Yanick Evola of U. Ottawa Gee-Gees

It's a 24-hour drive and my parents didn't get to see me play. The only time I saw them was when they dropped me off and came back at the end of the school year. But I had a lot of support from my teammates. At the end of the hockey season I decide I wanted to move closer to home. I talked to Yanick and I was worried, but he was awesome."

Yanick is Yanick Evola, manager and coach of the Women's Hockey program at University of Ottawa.

"I am very happy to have Sara on the team this year," said Evola, who spent four years in the QMJHL, before attending St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia to study Human Kinetics, the same area of study that Morrison is currently enrolled in.

"She was supposed to come here last year, but she chose Liberty. I think that going there was good for her. She gained confidence, was Rookie of the Year and she was one of the top scorers in the league. I think it was good for her to understand that she can score some goals and have a big impact on the team."

The move from Liberty to Ottawa is a big jump from a hockey perspective. University of Ottawa competes in the RSEQ conference along with Carleton, McGill, Concordia and Université de Montréal.

"We are playing in the best conference, in my book, in Canada. The RSEQ is a really strong conference. There are few players from the national team and the National Women's Hockey League," continued Evola. "It is a bit of an adjustment for first-year players; we do have 16 rookies this year. And Sara has been pretty good at adjusting her play. It is a more physical game, a faster game. So far it has been a bit of an adjustment, but she is getting there. We are looking forward to seeing her on the score sheet because she has some offensive ability."

The Human Kinetics program at Ottawa will last five years, maxing out Morrison's eligibility to play university hockey. But already, she is thinking about what will come next for her.

"When I got to here, Yanick told me to be prepared to work hard at (Human Kinetics). Beyond school, I want to live on the reserve. But I love the city too. I want to do both. I want to be part of the community, but part of the city as well," she said.

"When I am done Human Kinetics, I want to be a personal trainer for a while; help people, give them an opportunity to get fit, lose weight. They don't have someone there in the community full time, year round. For the hockey teams, the basketball teams, or even to prepare to come south and be able to compete



Sara Morrison was the captain of the Wemindji Paint Hills Midget A boys' squad and led them to within one win of qualifying for the provincial championships; the furthest a girl-captained team has ever advanced.

at a high level. And hopefully I can go on to be a physiotherapist."

But what about hockey? Will there be a place for Morrison on the ice after school?

"I hope that I can play eventually at an international level, the Olympic level. Whatever way, I want to play hockey for as long as I can."

Having faced a number of challenges and enjoyed some success, Morrison has developed a very simple philosophy that can be of value to other young people who leave home at a young age to pursue school or sports.

"Sometimes I have had to live with people I didn't know. The challenge is getting comfortable with the people that

you are living with, build a relationship, trust them, make them your family while your family is not with you," says Morrison.

"My mom always taught me, 'Don't be shy, speak up for yourself, and always try to make friends'. But it can be a challenge. I think it starts back home at school. Start speaking out in class, start speaking out on the team. Work on the little things first. Start being more independent at home," she said.

"And don't depend on your parents to do this or that for you. Say, you have a form to hand in. Don't wait until the last minute and then say, 'Hey mom, can you hand in this form for me'. Do it yourself!"

But Morrison balances that sense of independence with an appreciation of the sacrifices and hard work that her parents have endured for her benefit.

"I have been very lucky. I thank my dad and mom for all the hours they put into coaching me. And through the hard work and frustration, I would not have had a shot without my dad.



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"DEVERICK IS A PLAYER WHO WE HEARD ABOUT PRIOR TO THE DRAFT. WE HEARD THAT HE HAD TREMENDOUS UPSIDE, SKATED VERY WELL, HAS TREMENDOUS CHARACTER AND BRINGS A LOT OF GRIT TO THE RINK."

Coach Gordie Dwyer

Eye on the prize

Deverick Ottereyes' hockey career taking off with the PEI Rocket

By Daniel Coyle

The Quebec Major Junior Hockey League has produced some of the finest hockey talent in the world.

As part of the Canadian Hockey League (CHL), "The Q" is a league where only the most talented and dedicated hockey players can play.

This year, one of those players is Deverick Ottereyes. Raised for the large part in Waswanipi, the soft-spoken 17-year-old with sharp sense of humour is a regular in the lineup this season with the PEI Rocket. But, as is the case with any player at his level, the road to The Q was not an easy one. Prior to a recent PEI Rocket game versus the Victoriaville Tigres, currently the #4 ranked major Junior team in Canada, Ottereyes talked

to *the Nation* about some of the challenges he and his family have faced in support of his hockey dream.

"My mother is from Waswanipi and my father from Chisasibi," said Ottereyes. "I mostly grew up in Waswanipi because it was closer to Chibougamau, and closer to where they play a higher level of hockey."

Ottereyes' first opportunity to play hockey at a high level came with the Chibougamau Ambassadeurs, where he was coached by Daniel Bérubé. But playing in Chibougamau meant that Ottereyes had to leave home at an early age.

"We decided that I would play in Chibougamau so that I could improve

my game. That was the first time that I left home. At first, my parents drove back and forth, but that was difficult for them because they had jobs. Once I was in Pee Wee, I decided to move to Chibougamau by myself. I was 12 or 13 and I was billeting. It was difficult because I was still young, and at that age you still need your parents."

Ottereyes' hockey path would eventually lead him to Amos, where he played Midget AAA with the Amos Forestiers.

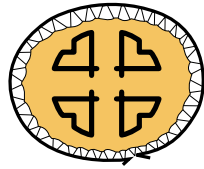
"I played my first year of midget in Midget Espoir. I was supposed to play in Amos, but I chose to stay in Midget Espoir to get more ice time. I eventually had to go to Amos for one year to get





NOVEMBER IS DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

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Artwork: Stephanie Lemmert 2010



Deverick Ottereyes

drafted into the QMJHL, and I think it was the right decision."

Part of that right decision included decisions about Ottereyes' education. While in Amos, Ottereyes got involved with the Quebec Ministry of Education's Sport-Études program, which is fast becoming an important part of the development process for young hockey players in Quebec. The program is designed to assist student-athletes continue their athletic development at an elite level while continuing to achieve at a high level in the high-school classroom.

"Sport-Études is a great program to improve hockey," says Ottereyes. "During the day you can play hockey and in the evening you can train."

Ottereyes is continuing his schooling while in PEI and is happy with the new environment he has found there.

"In PEI, it is great. My education is very good in PEI because I get to go to a regular school. In Amos, I had to do home schooling, but in PEI I get to go to a regular school with the guys on the team," Ottereyes explains.

However, the jump to The Q can have an impact on a young player's

"THANKS TO EVERYONE BACK HOME, AND SEND ME SOME CARIBOU MEAT!" HE SAYS WITH A BIG LAUGH.

academic focus, as Ottereyes has discovered.

"It is definitely a big difference between PEI and Amos because we do so much travelling. For example, this week I miss a whole week of school. But we are given schoolwork to do while we are on the road. We are always given time every day by the team to do homework. But, it is difficult when you are injured or when you are playing three games on the road."

Gord Dwyer, coach of the PEI Rocket, understands the challenges of balancing hockey and school. The former Montreal Canadiens defenceman also played in the QMJHL prior to launching his NHL career.

"One of the biggest things, one of the bright sides of playing Major Junior Hockey today is the structure of the education – the opportunity for the players to have their education looked after," said Dwyer.

"Whether it is high school or post-secondary, in English or French, the league really supports it and they offer opportunities to players to carry on their education after they finish in the league with scholarship programs."

For Ottereyes, school is definitely part of his future, with his intention to attend the University of PEI in a couple years.

"As any kid, I would like to be in the NHL and have my own business," says



Coach Gordie Dwyer of the PEI Rocket

Ottereyes. "But, I also want to go to university. That's my goal to get a university degree, in politics or become a lawyer maybe."

School has not been the only difference that Ottereyes has seen since joining the Rocket. The higher level of play has also presented him with challenges.

"This summer I was drafted in the 8th round. Being drafted just made me work harder. So definitely, the big challenge here is the level of hockey. It's the CHL; it's the top of Junior hockey. It is a huge jump for any rookie, any guy to make. It's not like Midget. Every guy on the team is good, and you have to battle for your spot every day."

Dwyer admits that the PEI Rocket had their eye on Ottereyes for some time prior to the draft.

"Deverick is a player who we heard about prior to the draft. We heard that he had tremendous upside, skated very well, has tremendous character and brings a lot of grit to the rink. We got him the 8th round and were very for-

tunate to get him," explains Dwyer, who is also in his rookie year as a QMJHL coach.

"We got him to training camp and were very impressed with him right from the start. He has a tremendous sense of humour and is a great individual. He's got a bit of a spark in his eyes and is a great athlete. He came to camp well conditioned, skates very well, and plays well on the defensive side of the puck," said Dwyer.

"We're in a youth movement right now with our team and Deverick is one of the core young guys on it. We're looking forward to him developing in our program and in our team culture and we're looking forward to having him here for the next four years."

It is important to note that school and hockey are not Ottereyes' only passions. And hockey is not his only game. When he is not on the ice or in the gym, you are most likely to find Ottereyes on one of the many golf courses located in PEI.

"I love playing golf," says Ottereyes. "And I am loving the south right now, with all the great golf courses around. That is one of the reasons why I would like to stay in PEI for a while."

While Ottereyes is enjoying the results of his hard work and time Down East, he still misses his home and family.

"It has not been a real shock (moving to PEI) because I have been living away for a long time now. The difficult part is being 24 hours away from home," says Ottereyes, after a long pause.

"I've been getting a lot of support from the people back home. And, I'd like to say thank you to my parents, and to any guys who have supported me."

However, there is one thing that Ottereyes misses above everything else. "Thanks to everyone back home, and send me some caribou meat!" he says with a big laugh.

There is little doubt that his family and many fans will be happy to share a caribou steak with Ottereyes when he does finally make it back home.



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Below are the dates and times when the workshops arrive in your community.

WEEK 2

Monday, November 21

Information workshops in Mistissini: Sports Complex from 3pm to 9pm

Tuesday, November 22

Information workshops in Ouje-Bougoumou: Band Office (conference room) from 3pm to 9pm

Wednesday, November 23

Information workshops in Waswanipi: Youth Centre from 12pm to 4pm

Thursday, November 24

Information workshops in Amos: Hotel Amosphere(upstairs) from 10am to 2pm



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Challenges obliterated

The Cree Youth Business Symposium goes off without a hitch

By Amy German

Setting out to change the way young Crees think about working in the field of business, the Cree Nation Youth Council (CNYC) recently hosted its own Cree Youth Business Symposium to inspire a new generation of Crees when it comes to the possibilities of the business world.

The event brought together Cree youth with an international panel of experts on business, finance and consulting for three days and gave them the opportunity to learn about the business world through a series of challenges they were able to compete in.

According to CNYC Communications Officer Jeremy Diamond, one of the symposium's organizers, the three-day event, held at Val-d'Or's Forestel Hotel October 25-27, was run like a contest between 10 teams of youth.

Approximately 100 youth participated in the competitive event that was run similarly to an event that Diamond had attended previously on behalf of the CNYC.

"We attended the Young Entrepreneurs Symposium that was organized by the Dreamcatcher Charitable Foundation in Vancouver last year. It totally blew us away and was so life-changing for all of the young people there and so we got the idea from that," said Diamond.

Fortunately for Diamond, he was able to invite some of the panelists he heard in Vancouver in 2010 so that the Cree youth were able to benefit from the expertise given by several major international heavy-hitters in the business world as well as various major players in the Cree business world.

"Dr. Ernesto Sirroli was the keynote speaker for the event. We wanted him to set the tone for the symposium and he did an awesome job. He is from Italy and very well known in the industry that he's in. He invented a new field as a consultant that deals with Indigenous peoples worldwide when it comes to approaching businesses matters.

"It was very interesting as he has revolutionized this industry, switching it from having non-Natives going to the Indigenous to tell them what they should be doing to approaching it from an angle where he was actually getting their input on what they want to do," said Diamond.

The event also featured international guest speakers Mike Tamaki from New Zealand who presented on behalf of his homegrown cultural tourism business and Master International Entrepreneur Chris Costello from Chile. Not to be outdone by the rest of the world, Canadian country music superstar Crystal Shawanda was on hand as the event's special guest speaker.

Bringing the message home, the CNYC had a series of speakers from the Cree nation to share their experiences in the business world. They included: CREECO's Business Development Coordinator Rodney Hester; George Awashish of Awashish Outdoor Adventures; Christopher and Sarah Pash of Pash Travel; lawyer Jean-Paul Murdoch of the Cree Regional Authority/ Grand Council of the Crees; Elder Robbie Matthew; Matthew Iserhoff and Pakesso Mukash of CerAmory; NDP MP Romeo Saganash; Charlotte Ottereyes of the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association; Tanya Pash of CREECO/ the Board of Compensation; and Cree recording artist Melissa Pash.

In terms of the actual competition, upon arrival the youth were broken into

10 teams of 10 participants. Once together their first challenge was to come up with a name for their group and then design a logo to represent their team.

The first challenge that the teams faced consisted of learning about investing in the stock market. Using pretend cash available on the Wallstreetsurvivor.com website, each team was challenged to see who could make the most returns and come out on top in terms of investing.

Through the participation from CREECO, the teams also had two separate challenges for marketing where they had to create an ad for either Air Creebec or Quality Inn & Suites and then create a print campaign for their chosen business.

For the marketing challenge, the teams had to first conceive and then create a storyboard for an actual ad, which they filmed with the help of a production team that was hired to work at the event. Having to pick actors and directors from within their own teams, the participants had the opportunity to learn what goes into this kind of process.

Similarly, for the creative challenge, teams had to conceive and then design an ad with the aid of a graphic designer and then figure out where they could place the ad and how much it would cost to launch a marketing campaign.

The teams also had a separate sales challenge that was organized by the CNYC, which commissioned 10 original paintings from artist Natasia Mukash. Each team was given a painting, which in



turn they had to sell, with 50% of the funds going to the artist and the other 50% going to the CNYC to help fund youth entrepreneurs.

"Each team had to sell a painting through their own contacts or to businesses they found in Val-d'Or. It was really good for them to get that experience from selling a painting as it wasn't just about the actual painting but the idea of the painting," said Diamond.

During the investors' panel challenge, teams had the opportunity to pitch a business idea to a panel of experts and get feedback that could potentially be followed up on by these investors at a later date.

The investors' panel was comprised of people from the Aboriginal Business Canada, Eeyou Economic Group, the Business Development Bank of Canada and guest speaker Chris Costello, who runs an investing firm.

"We got a lot of great feedback from this challenge, specifically on the last group that presented," said Diamond.

"The idea was to provide an opportunity for these young people to make contacts and connections with these investors so that they could get their business ideas off the ground. The last team that presented had a young person from Chisasibi who already had a business idea written up and pitched the idea. Now he is in touch with those investors to work on the next steps to get his idea off the ground.

"This was exactly what we wanted to achieve at that specific challenge, to have a young person walk out of there as an entrepreneur with investors and funding lined up. This was really awesome," said Diamond.

For CREECO's Communications Officer Jonathan Saganash the event was an all-out success because of the results that the organizers were able to see and the direct impact the event had on the Cree youth.

"We were able to see the context and degree to which the youth are actually interested in marketing and promotion. We had all of those videos that the teams produced for Quality Inn & Suites and Air Creebec and we were able to see that they had a lot of fun with this and were able to get into it. And, at the end of the day, we had our panel of judges from all over the world look at them.

"The youth who attended this event returned home excited about what they had learned and the stories they had heard from the panelists. Learning about investments through the wallstreet.com challenge, we were able to see that some participants excelled at this and did incredibly well, just like with the sales challenge for the paintings. In some cases, we were amazed at just how much they were able to raise. In total, they raised about \$34,000," said Saganash.

Coming from a completely different perspective, panel speaker Tanya Pash who is the comptroller for CREECO and the Board of Compensation and holds various other titles within the Cree nation in terms of finance, had the opportunity to share her years of experience with the youth.

In terms of being a woman in business and having spent years of dedication building first her education and then her career, Pash understood firsthand what it is like to be in the position that many of the youth attending the event are in, being at the beginning of or planning out their careers.

The advice she gave the participants came from the perspective of the Women in Business panel. She did not only speak to the women in the audience but to every young Cree wanting to take that first step forward.

"I told them that I am just a person and that there is nothing unique about my success other than commitment and hard work. You will have opportunities that will come and it's up to you to seize these moments and to face these challenges as well as accept them and commit to them when it is the hardest. You have to find a support network, be it your parents or your spouse, somebody who you can turn to when things are at their hardest. It's not easy, but it is not impossible.

"I have never accepted being a woman as an obstacle. If I view myself as a person and as an equal when I walk into a meeting room filled with men, they will be able to get that vibe off of me. I never let it be something that's an obstacle or a challenge. I walk in as their equal and for the most part people accept that," said Pash.

At the end of the symposium, the team that came out on top won a trophy and a cash prize of \$5000 that was shared amongst the 10 members. They were also awarded the opportunity to participate in the next year's national Young Entrepreneurs Symposium to be held in Ottawa.

Prizes aside however, it is through events like these that the entire Cree nation wins out. By opening up the minds of the next generation to the possibilities ahead of them when it comes to the business world is surely the best way to build a brighter future.



Business is booming

Opportunities are there for Aboriginal businesses

By Will Nicholls

With greater and greater numbers of Aboriginal businesses and economic development corporations joining Canada's economy, the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) stepped up to the plate. Their recent conference and tradeshow in Ottawa on October 24 and 25 was an eye-opener for many.

Attitudes are changing and this includes the Aboriginal communities and businesses. First vice-president Glenn Nolan of the Prospectors and Developers Association said business isn't the same as it was in the 1960s. He said there are heavier environmental standards and social responsibility means including Aboriginals at all levels of development and the opportunities arising from that.

"Mining doesn't kill a culture, poverty does," Nolan said. People will leave their communities and lose their culture. "Families have to go where there are jobs," added Nolan saying usually they still face marginalization anyhow.

With the new attitudes though Nolan felt those trends could become a thing of the past. He said there were exciting and huge opportunities for Aboriginal businesses but they needed to get out there and find out what they are and how could they participate.



Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development John Duncan couldn't agree more and said, "Strengthening Aboriginal entrepreneurship is a key priority of our government's Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development."

"BY THE END OF 2011 THE ABORIGINAL MARKET SHOULD BE ABOUT \$24 BILLION PER YEAR."

In fact, he announced three projects the Fed's were investing in. The most interesting one was a partnership with the Status of Women Canada to fund a pilot project that supports Inuit women in business. The Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada will get \$348,633 for Inuit Women in Business Network. It will help them to understand the finances, get mentors and an array of resources to help them get started or grow. Another fund of \$3,112,000 for the Métis Entrepreneurship Fund (MEF) has been approved.

Increasing Aboriginal participation in the economy and strengthening entrepreneurship creates jobs and improves the well-being and quality of life for Aboriginal people Duncan said. He added this benefitted all of Canada as "over \$315 billion in potential resource developments have been identified in or near Aboriginal communities." Aboriginal business should check out new government reforms such as the



First Nations Land Management, and First Nations Development Act.

"As Aboriginal business people and entrepreneurs you are the key to Canada's future economic prosperity," Duncan said at the conference.

While some checked out the Plan Nord Investments in northern Quebec, others hurried over to GoForth's 100 Essential Skills for Entrepreneurs workshop by company founder Dr. Leslie Robert. Earlier this year in March, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada paid \$249,900 to GoForth Institute to help modify its successful online entrepreneurial education program to make it relevant to an Aboriginal audience. The result was dynamic and well received.

Other workshops dealt with strategy planning, making impact benefit agreements, selling to the government, finance sources, and working with foreign partners.

All this shows how the Aboriginal market is growing and that Aboriginal businesses are no longer satisfied with just figureheads, stereotypes or just small potatoes. Many are rising to challenges that encompass more than just their communities and giving the mainstream Canadian economy a run for the money.

The Nation had a chance to go one-on-one with Clint Davis, President and CEO of the CCAB.

The Nation: Besides the conference what has the CCAB been up to lately?

Clint Davis: It comes down to a number of things. The first being credible and salient information gets out to the larger business community and the public. The first thing we did is an Aboriginal business survey. We surveyed over 1,000 small Aboriginal businesses, First Nations, Métis and Inuit, from coast to

they are hiring and they make an effort to hire other Aboriginals.

Are these reports available?

There are two reports and they are available on our website. The other thing we did that I feel was quite significant was we collaborated with TD Economics and we supported them with information and data where they sized the Aboriginal market. So when you talk about the GDP of Canada or Toronto or the market for Chinese people living in Canada, we were looking to see what

“OVER \$315 BILLION IN POTENTIAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED IN OR NEAR ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES.”

coast. We also interviewed 50 CEOs of economic development corporations. What I mean by that is they are the economic arms of Aboriginal governments. The reason why that was so groundbreaking was the last report that was done of Aboriginal entrepreneurs was in 2001 by Stats Can. As you know information is key for business and for business success. So we heard on a regular basis: who are these Aboriginal businesses and where do they exist and what do they sell?

We were able to get some financial assistance from the federal government and other corporate partners and we embarked upon it. It was exciting to come away with some really great findings, particularly in the success of Aboriginal entrepreneurs. What kinds of businesses they operated covering a gambit of industries. We also found what some of the challenges were and what kept them up at night, particularly the economic development corporations as well the Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

The neat thing about the entrepreneurs was that the majority of them are successful despite the fact that when we surveyed them we were going through the great recession. They're also very optimistic about the future. The great thing is once they hit a certain level and

the Aboriginal market was. TD looked at the spending power of individual people, the growth of businesses and their spending power as well as the discretionary spending power of Aboriginal governments. They came up with fact that by the end of 2011 the Aboriginal market should be about \$24 billion per year. A lot of this was tied to the resource sector as Canada is a natural resource country. And if you see the prices and demands of commodities over the past couple of years the expectation is that it will grow to \$32 billion by 2016 – which would be larger than the governments of Newfoundland, Labrador and PEI combined. So their GDP wouldn't be the size of the Aboriginal market by 2016.

Those were two pinnacle things we did over the last couple of years. Our goal is to try to change the conversation where people have certain perceptions of Aboriginal businesses where we are small corner stores or we have casinos or just sell cigarettes. While casinos and tobacco are certainly part of the Aboriginal economy as well as being legal and legitimate, the opportunity for us is to tell the story of changes in Aboriginal business is that it encompasses something bigger than the stereotypes. That's what makes it very exciting.

Is that one of the aims of the conference here?

Yes, but economic development conferences can be a dime a dozen so when we work with our federal partners and others we try to figure out what we can do to be different. We said what can we do to attract small business owners, the economic development corporations and mainstream business? We said let's look at what the main opportunities are. When you think of the major opportunities that are going to be driving Canada's economy you think of potentials like Plan Nord in Quebec where billions will be invested, the lower Churchill in Labrador, potash development, the Ring of Fire, a \$35 billion mining discovery in northern Ontario – and every one of them has an Aboriginal piece to them. If this was 20-25 years ago no one would be talking to us so when talk about opportunities is it some small hokey thing? No, it's real and whatever is going to drive the Canadian economy will have an Aboriginal component to it.

For the conference, we said let's look at some of these opportunities. Plus, we wanted to give people a way to hone their business skills.

Would this be the Essentials skills workshop?

Yes, it's very dynamic and I've never seen something like that. We're trying to learn from other entrepreneurs who are not necessarily Aboriginal. A good example is Kunal Gupta, the CEO of Polar Mobile, which was a small company a few years ago that started selling apps. Before you know it the market exploded and now he has one of the fastest-growing companies in Canada. He's going to talk about the value of social media and how it can help your business. This is a very timely issue.

This sounds very interesting?

Well, it's baby steps but we wanted people to feel that they hadn't wasted their time here. We wanted them to walk away with something and I think we have achieved it. I can see some areas where we could have improved it, but I'm hoping to have another next year.

Hydlo and **FRIENDS** Online

UNDERSTAND, SHARE, CREATE



Discover another side of the Eastmain-1-A/Sarcelle/Rupert project.

Go behind the scenes with Jimmy and Tommy Neeposh, William K. Gunner-Eenatuck, Josie Jimiken, Robert Coonishish, George Pisimopeo, Jérôme Gingras, Timothy Moses, Mylène Landry, Johnny Saganash and many others.

Explore our new Web site. Don't miss it.

Visit our Web site for
a chance to win a

\$500

gift certificate
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www.hydloandfriends.com



For more information, scan this QR code.

The contest will run from November 9 to December 18, 2011 and is only open to residents of the Aboriginal communities of Eeyou Istchee who are 18 years of age or older. One entry per participant. The prize will be drawn and the winner announced on December 21 at 8:30 a.m., during the broadcast of the Hydlo and Friends program on JBCCS.

A call to craft and artistry

CNACA discusses its place in Cree society

By Amy German

The Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association (CNACA) has seen its own share of growing pains, much like any other entity in the Cree nation but six years later it is struggling to gain new ground.

As one of Eeyou Istchee's smallest entities, the organization has evolved from managing the Watchiya arts and crafts store in Val-d'Or to become a regional entity geared at supporting any variety of Cree artists. While the Watchiya store closed its doors in 2008, CNACA has since looked at other means of developing artists within the Cree nation.

Created out of Section 28 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, CNACA has its mandate with the Cree Regional Authority and Indian Affairs for funding with the specific intent to represent, train and develop Native arts and crafts and then promote them in regional, national and international spheres.

"For now we have a strategic plan to develop all of these areas and so we have evolved from our original intent of representing the artists and artisans of the Cree nation to promoting Cree culture and contemporary artists. This has been added to it. We now are multi-tiered, representing artists in film, music, literature as well as other areas that Crees may be interested in.

"We have also developed a partnership with the Cree Trappers Association (CTA) as well as Cree Outfitting and Tourism (COTA) in a three-part agreement to support each other in that regard, and so this is what we are now trying to develop," explained CNACA Executive Director Lloyd Cheechoo.

At the same time, with the building of Aanischaaukamikw, the new Cree Cultural Institute slated to open its doors in Oujé-Bougoumou later on this year, Cheechoo said his organization has found itself spread very thin. While

CNACA is partnered with Institute to eventually provide a new version of the Watchiya store within the Institute to sell Cree arts and crafts to the public who visit the new museum, this will not be possible immediately. Instead, Cheechoo said CNACA will be opening a separate gallery within the Institute.

At the same time, Cheechoo said CNACA needs greater recognition within the Cree nation as it is mandated to do so much more.

"The other regional entities, like the Health Board and the School Board, have their own arts-and-crafts projects where they hire craftsmen to create arts and crafts for their projects. All the new schools that have been built within our nation have required arts and crafts, but none of this is going through CNACA.

"There should be an understanding that CNACA represents the artists, the products and everything to do with that. We have the mandate to do this," said Cheechoo.

Meeting with other entities at the end of October in Chisasibi for their annual general assembly, Cheechoo said they were able to discuss CNACA's role in Cree society with the other entities they had invited, namely COTA and the CTA.

While the event was incredibly insightful, Cheechoo said more meetings need to happen and they need to be more frequent. He feels that CNACA needs to have a larger presence throughout the Cree nation so that it can accomplish more.

"Just like the CTA is regional and has a local entity in each community and COTA has evolved and is funded through a First Nations office, you then have CNACA that doesn't get the same support from a local level.

"We want a funded local committee in every community and this was our initial idea. But, there is no budget. This



would involve a lot more than just our initial intentions," said Cheechoo.

As there are local arts-and-crafts activities in each community, CNACA wants to be able to be a part of these events and support the local craftspeople.

For the time being, according to Cheechoo, the organization's main focus will be all about what is happening within each community to make sure that there is a stock of arts-and-crafts products available in the future. For this to happen, the gathering and storing of raw materials with the CTA as per what they agreed upon is essential so that the next steps can happen.

Lastly, CNACA will be looking to promote itself within each community so that the organization can become more known amongst Crees. This way the artists will know that CNACA is there for them.

Seeing is believing

***Canada: Apartheid Nation*, looks at the brutal living conditions in Attawapiskat**

By Amy German

"Unless you can actually fly in there, you would never believe that what you were seeing was in Canada," says Charlie Angus, Timmins-James Bay NDP MP in reference to the Third World-like living conditions in Attawapiskat, Ontario.

Attawapiskat is the subject of *Canada: Apartheid Nation*, a new documentary by director Angela O'Leary and producer Laurie Stewart doing the festival circuit. This 26-minute film delves into the hardcore reality of life on the tiny, fly-in-only reserve to show – up close and personal – how the Canadian government has failed these people.

While this Cree community has made recent headlines because its housing situation is so dire that there are literally hundreds of people living in temporary shelters and others in uninsulated tents, wood sheds or black-mould infested homes, O'Leary has gone beyond the headlines.

"My goal was to really show it! You do hear a lot about the living conditions and a lot about the issues in the news, but not as much as you actually should. A lot of the news stories are just one-minute clips or still photos that just don't capture what is really going on and what people are actually experiencing. I wanted to bring this to life," said O'Leary.

In her film, O'Leary shows just how bad things really are: the lack of access to clean water and the effects of contaminated water on the residents, plus inadequate health care, education and housing conditions. In all, the film paints a picture so bleak

and dismal that as Angus says, it is hard to believe this is Canada where life is supposed to be so good.

All of these factors are then juxtaposed with the fact that one of Canada's richest diamond mines is operating only miles away from the community.

"This was not a documentary that I did for people who are already interested in the situation on First Nations reserves. I didn't want to appeal to the people who are already sympathetic to the cause. I wanted to get to the people who don't care, for lack of a better expression. There are so many people who could care less and don't understand why these residents keep complaining when they don't have to pay any taxes and get free education. They are like 'What's their problem?'" explained O'Leary.

Having never made a film before, O'Leary said she first got the idea when she worked on remote First Nations communities, like Eabemetoong First Nation, as a young woman 20 years ago while teaching water safety for the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

When she returned home to her northern Ontario community of Espanola, she said nobody would believe her when she told them the terrible living conditions she had witnessed.

Twenty years later, O'Leary wanted to see if conditions had improved and was shocked to discover that not only had nothing changed, but the stories of devastating life circumstances were barely penetrating the main-

stream news save for the occasional headline. At that, she felt that most people were still ignoring the situation. Her film in itself is a call to action.

And, so far, having screened the film at Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa and at the Toronto Indie Film Festival, the reaction has been that more needs to be done to deal with this situation. Yet, having made the documentary within the last year, a state of emergency was recently declared in Attawapiskat regarding the dire housing crisis.

"I am a white, middle-class Canadian and in that I consider myself to be someone who is privileged. There are many people like me who are absolutely ignorant that this kind of situation exists, that there are people in Canada who don't have water. It is those people that need to know," said O'Leary.

And it is for this reason that O'Leary is looking to take what can be called Canada's shame abroad as the film has now been entered into a series of major film festivals, including Sundance and Slamdance in the States as well as several festivals in Europe.

By screening her film as often as possible, O'Leary hopes that these remote communities like Attawapiskat with living conditions on par with Third World countries may finally see the Canadian government take action to level the playing field for Canada's First Peoples.

For more info: www.canadaapartheidnation.com

"THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE LIKE ME WHO ARE ABSOLUTELY IGNORANT THAT THIS KIND OF SITUATION EXISTS, THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE IN CANADA WHO DON'T HAVE WATER. IT IS THOSE PEOPLE THAT NEED TO KNOW."



Shannen's dream lives on

A new book for young readers tells the incredible story of Shannen Koostachin

By Amy German

She was the voice of a generation of children who had grown up without a school and the face of a movement to fight the Canadian government for educational equality. Though she died in 2010, a new book allows Shannen Koostachin's story to live on forever.

At the age of 13, Koostachin, a Cree girl from the Ontario community of Attawapiskat, spoke out against the federal government that was attempting to justify denying her community a school. For over a decade at that point the elementary-school students of the community had been going to class in portable trailers, which had since become dilapidated, leaky and cold.

The JR Nakogee Elementary School that the children in her community had previously attended had been rendered toxic and unfit for students as it had been built upon a diesel spill that over a 30-year period had turned toxic.

Forever passionate about education, Koostachin became part of a major campaign to get Attawapiskat a new school through YouTube and social-networking campaigns, the largest child-driven movement for education in Canadian history.

While the community did finally get an okay from the federal government for a new school, sadly Koostachin would never see the ground broken as she was killed in a car accident in the spring of 2010.

Koostachin had a dream of all First Nations children in Canada having access to what she called "safe and comfy" schools and while that dream on its own has become a separate movement through the Shannen's Dream Foundation, award-winning Canadian author Janet Wilson is giving Koostachin's story back to the youth.

"It is a young reader's book, like a middle reader's book. I see kids reading it from Grade 4 to 8, but the subject is such that kids of any age would be interested," said Wilson.

Like the majority of Canadians, up until recently Wilson had never heard of Koostachin. It wasn't until she began researching kids through the International Children's Peace Prize organization that Koostachin's story was recommended to her by one of the organizers.



While Koostachin was nominated for the award for her fight to end educational apartheid amongst First Nations children in Canada, she was not a winner. Nevertheless, it was from this list of nominees that Wilson selected kids to be subjects of her other books.

"The series is called Kids' Power and so they are all about kids. I have another First Nations story called *Lacey and the African Grandmothers* and it's a sweet little story about Lacey as she raised money for the grandmothers in Africa who are affected by HIV/AIDS," said Wilson.

Shannen and the Dream for a School is different from the rest of the Kids' Power series in that it is a full-length story and though it is a reimagining of Koostachin's life, the names and events in the book have not been changed but instead have come from newspaper clippings and interviews.

What is also different about the Koostachin story is that this book is the only one that is about a Canadian problem as all of Wilson's other books are about educating Canadian kids about the developing nations.

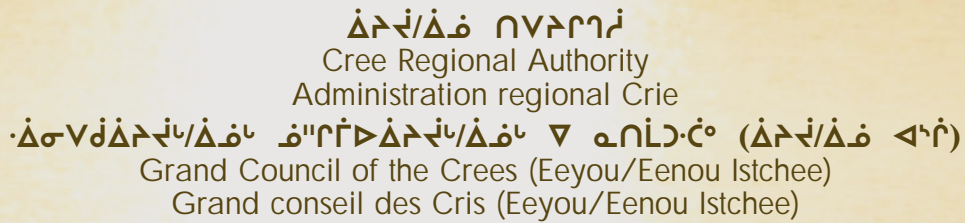
"They are actually about ordinary kids who have done something that has turned out to be extraordinary. I don't think they started out trying to be extraordinary, they just stood up and decided to speak out and young people started to support them and then the movement carried on. This is because kids can't really do something this amazing in isolation, but if they work together, then things happen," said Wilson.

To write the book, Wilson visited Attawapiskat to learn about Koostachin through her family and community. Wilson said she couldn't imagine writing about a community like Attawapiskat without seeing it firsthand.

While Attawapiskat is known for its brutal, Third-World-like conditions, Wilson said that despite the poverty and devastation, it was the humour and optimism of the residents that rounded-out the experience of going there.

In the end, Wilson said she got the feeling that Koostachin's still grieving family was happy to see the book written about her so that her message and teachings to the world can live on.

For info on the book: <http://secondstorypress.ca>



A photograph of two men standing side-by-side, holding ceremonial shovels. They are wearing traditional Navajo regalia, including yellow fringed vests over white shirts and dark trousers. The man on the left is wearing a patterned tie, and the man on the right is wearing a patterned tie. They are standing in front of a white backdrop. A woman in a white dress is partially visible on the right side of the image.

Oujé-Bougoumou's journey has been a long and difficult one.



We welcome Oujé-Bougoumou as it will now take its place alongside the other Cree First Nations of Eeyou Istchee.

By Lyle Stewart

Drunk driver at the wheel

"You won't recognize Canada when I get through with it"

– Stephen Harper, 2005

Never did a politician utter truer words. Indeed, we soon won't even be able to find ourselves on Google maps. But no matter: the road to Stephen Harper's Canada of the not-so-distant future is wide open and his Conservative government is putting the pedal to the metal.

Our national government is hurtling down a legislative autobahn, on which it has evidently decided to unilaterally and without notice suspend all speed limits. During a 22-day period after Parliament resumed its work in mid-September, this new Tory majority elected with less than 40% of the popular vote last spring shut down debate no less than five times on important pieces of legislation.

While previous Liberal majorities have occasionally abused this power, never have we seen such flagrant disregard for the principles of parliamentary democracy. Any democracy worthy of the name absolutely requires full and open discussion of the laws proposed to govern us. In the absence of any emergency that requires an expedited response, there is no justification for what amounts to the muzzling of the 60% of us who did not vote for the Conservative Party.

But why not? The power of Harper's political vehicle has just been massively souped-up. Now he is sitting in the leather driver's seat of a growling muscle car when the only other big vehicles on the road don't even have licensed drivers, and are more or less idling in neutral by the curb.

It might not have been this way had Jack Layton still been here to steer the NDP along this dangerous road. Without Jack at the wheel, however the New Democratic Party is stuck reading the owner's manual on how to operate as

the official opposition. Nor are many of the party's best and brightest paying much attention, since no less than nine party stalwarts are vying to replace Layton as leader, as if anyone ever could. And this race won't be decided until late March. Who knows what destructive cargo the Tories will be able to truck through Parliament by then.

Meanwhile, the federal Liberals, formerly known as Canada's Natural Governing Party, are ever more hopeless and confused, led by an "interim" leader during an indefinite and likely terminal period of trying to repair a rusted-out, obsolete sports car. It's next to impossible to find replacement parts and the

"YOU WON'T RECOGNIZE CANADA WHEN I GET THROUGH WITH IT"

– STEPHEN HARPER, 2005

team is finding it hard to adapt to the new rules of the road. Without an engineer who knows the difference between "drive" and "reverse", the Liberal Party's ability to delay, much less prevent, the Harper juggernaut is next to non-existent.

From this point of the journey, the way forward for Canada looks like a race toward a dead end as our supreme democratic institution is not allowed to debate the priorities of the day:

- An omnibus crime bill that combines several pieces of legislation that will dramatically raise incarceration numbers and costs at a time when crime is, generally speaking, at its lowest point in 40 years.

- The summary execution of the gun registry – despite the opposition of our

actual crime fighters, Canada's police forces – and a metaphorical burial at sea of all the data the registry has collected at great cost over the years to prevent its resurrection by another government regardless of its democratic legitimacy.

- And another death sentence, this time for the venerable Canadian Wheat Board, despite the support it still has of a large majority of Canadian wheat farmers.

These are not piddling, meaningless issues that have received the full attention they deserve. Their common thread is that most Canadians are opposed (even though I recognize the gun registry isn't all that popular in Eeyou Istchee). Thus the hurry to rush these monumental changes to our social fabric into law. The government cannot be bothered to try to convince a majority of us that this legislation is the right thing to do. The idea of gaining this level of democratic legitimacy is not a priority, nor even a consideration.

So there is no shame in the fact that the Conservative approach to governance is a monument to arrogance. With a majority, no matter how slight, the Tories gleefully exhibit a sneering disrespect for anyone who might object to their agenda. And forget about trying to be the lone hero standing in front of a tank in a Canuck version of Tiananmen Square. For the man in the armour with his hand on the wheel, the vast majority of us are already road kill, quickly and easily forgotten as we fade in his rear-view mirror.

The Tories have realized that just enough Canadians can't be bothered to notice, much less care about, that they are passengers in a vehicle driven by someone who is drunk with power. At the same time the party's hardcore base only cheers their leaders on to drive even faster. How long will it be before our democracy is driven off the cliff?



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UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

Housing crisis needs solutions

by Xavier Kataquapit

In reading the news headlines today I noticed that one of the main stories was about my home community of Attawapiskat on the James Bay coast. The news item highlighted the fact that there is a housing crisis happening on the James Bay coast in communities like Attawapiskat, Fort Albany and Kashechewan. People are actually living in tents and sheds. This is not exactly news to me. As long as I can remember housing has always been in a state of crisis on the James Bay coast.

I grew up in a crowded living space in Attawapiskat. As far back as I can remember, I shared a single room with at least four or five brothers. We had two sets of bunk beds and a large double bed in one room to accommodate us. Our parents had another room to themselves and our sisters had one of their own. Privacy and a space of our own was not available. We shared our home with each other and often many other family members and friends. If we felt like having a bit of privacy we left the house to spend time outdoors.

A crowded home was a normal part of life for me. For the longest time, I thought it was how people lived in the rest of the world. Most of my friends, cousins and relations lived the same way. Nobody had homes with just three or four people living in them as it was more like 10 or 15. It was never easy to share those little houses back then but we had no choice.

The only time I ever felt a sense of having my own private area to call my own was at school. At least in the classroom, I had my own desk where I could keep my books, pencils and anything else that was special to me. There was a sense of ownership and privacy in keeping small keepsakes in one place where they were somewhat safe from so many other hands. School was a break for all of us even though it felt like a very foreign idea.

I remember watching family television shows and seeing teenagers or children with their own rooms complete with a bed for one, a desk and a fish bowl on top of their own dresser. Their homes were large and had so many rooms. I thought that this fanciful lifestyle was how wealthy people lived and it was not the norm. It was a big shock to me when I attended high school in Timmins and North Bay and discovered that just about every family had a big home. In the south I found that children really expected to have their own rooms.

Although things were tight for us about 20 years ago, I always thought it would get better and the promises from our leaders and politicians would come true for more housing. However, the situation has only worsened and now things seem to be out of control for our local First Nation leaders to

handle. There are far too few homes for far too many people. Statistically, Native people are identified as one of the fastest-growing population segments in Canada but our housing needs are not keeping up with this trend.

I commend MP Charlie Angus and MPP Gilles Bisson – both of the NDP – for bringing this crisis to the attention of the public and the governments of Canada and Ontario. Perhaps someday soon their party will be in power and things will change for the better for my people.

There was another headline in the paper today that caught my attention and that had to do with the fact that this past October, the world population surpassed seven billion people on our planet. I couldn't help but think that our Native communities are reflecting now what will happen in other parts of the world in the near future.

Experts are predicting that the world population growth will have an effect on housing, food supplies, transportation, energy use and material consumption. Scientists estimate that our species generates a great deal of food but we waste tons of it every year and we also consume over half of the world's available freshwater supply. Even though we may be consuming a great deal of the world's resources, nearly a billion people still go hungry. The distribution of wealth is not fair.

If we can't offer a solution to over-crowded homes and an insufficient amount of houses for First Nation people on reserves in Canada, how is society in general going to deal with the world-population growth in the future. If our government is finding it difficult to provide a solution to Native housing, how are they going to deal with mass transportation, food supplies, waste management and affordable housing for a growing population? We need an entirely new way of thinking and we need people in power who can offer creative solutions that are geared to making sure everyone has a chance at a good life and not just a small percentage of the powerful elite. I think we will desperately need leaders like Charlie and Gilles to take us to a more peaceful era where the playing field is fair and honourable.

Legal Notice

Please note that CHEYENNE ELIZABETH BOBBISH-MATOUSH whose home address is 121 BEESUM ROAD, CHISASIBI, QUEBEC, J0M 1E0 will be submitting to the REGISTRAR OF CIVIL STATUS an application to change her name to CHEYENNE ELIZABETH BOBBISH. Notice completed in CHISASIBI, QUEBEC on 07 NOVEMBER 2011.

CLASSIFIEDS

BIRTHDAYS

Happy birthday to my Bro Christopher Paul on December 1st in Mississauga, Qc. Have fun and many more to come... Sorry I haven't been in contact for a long time, but you know I love you anyways and your sweet family. Take care and hopefully one day we will plan a trip to see Wrestlemania or a concert (hmm maybe Judas Priest Nov. 24th?). From, your big bro Bill and family

We would like to wish our daughter and sister, Sarah Cooper a happy 16th birthday on November 8th, 2011. WOW, time sure flies by when you are enjoying the years with such an adorable daughter and sister. We love you so much and hope you have the best day on your birthday. God Bless, from mom and dad in Ouje and your bro Dion, sis Sarah and twins Norman and William.

2 years ago on November 9th, 2009 at 8:08am, I gave birth to a very handsome boy and a brother to our girls; we named him Hunter Kole Kaleb Drake Bahbahshabenawskum Cheezo. Time sure flies by so fast! It's been two years already! In these two years we have experienced a lot and learned from you our son/brother. We love you so much and have a nice birthday. Enjoy every minute of it as much as we will and many more to come! We love you! From Mama (Andrea), Papa (Jonathan), and your three sisters Skyler, Liberty and Caylin xox (Eastmain)

Hunter Cheezo would like to send greetings to his fellow birthday celebrants (people that have the same birthday as him) on November 9th, 2011. Happy Birthday to: Kurtis Sandy, Alison Petagumskum and Layla Gilpin (all from Whap). May this day bring us special things that we have asked for. Happy birthday to all of us and enjoy your day and many more to come! From Hunter Cheezo (Eastmain)

Happy happy Birthday to Aliyah Diamond Gunner on Nov 4th! Also to her lil bro Canon Diamond on Nov 7th. Wish you

many more wonderful birthdays. From auntie and the boys on Broadback str.

I want to wish a very special woman named Caroline Saganash Grondin a very happy 60th birthday on Nov. 15th; and she still looks good, that's because she wears a heart of gold! From all of your family, we love you dearly and appreciate all the warm gestures and the love that you give us. We are so grateful to have such a wonderful, caring and nurturing mother in our lives. Happy birthday Mom xxx (from Jeanne Saganash)

I would like to wish a happy 2nd birthday to someone very special that came into the world at the same time as me but am 10 hours older. Happy birthday Harmony Cheezo! Love you xox (Nov 9) From your witchdipsku mahkin Hunter Cheezo xox

PERSONAL MESSAGES

I am looking for an apartment that is not expensive and with all amenities. Safe, clean, with good heating, plumbing, oven, stove, good fridge, washer and dryer; please send info for the Montreal area. Trina Slapcoff trins20089@gmail.com

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Where to get help: bilingual, anonymous, confidential and free phone services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Missing Children's Network: They'll help you find kids who have run away or disappeared. 514-843-4333.

Kid's Help Phone Line: 1-800-668-6868 (www.kidshelpphone.ca)

Youth helpline: 1-800-263-2266 (www.teljeunes.com)

Parent helpline: 1-800-361-5085 (www.parenthelpline.ca)

Drugs: help and reference: 1-800-265-2626 (www.drogue-aiderreference.qc.ca)

Gambling: help and reference: 1-800-265-2626 (www.info-reference.qc.ca)

S.O.S. Conjugal Violence: 1-800-363-9010 (www.sosviolenceconjugale.com)

Health and Sexuality resources center: 1-888-855-7432 (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm) (www.criss.org)

Gay Helpline: 1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal: 1-866-403-4688. (www.nwsm.info)

Suicide Action Québec: 1-866-277-3553

Residential School Survivors: A 24 hour toll-free crisis line is available to provide immediate emotional assistance and can be reached 24-hours a day, seven days a week: 1-866-925-4419. Other support services and information for survivors is available on the AFN website at: <http://www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources.html>

Goodman Cancer Research Centre presents: Waging the War on Cancer in the 21st Century Pancreatic Cancer: Progress, Challenges and Paradigm ShiftsSpeakers: Dr. George Zogopoulos, Surgeon and Libby Znaimer, Breast and Pancreatic Cancer Survivor Tuesday, November 22, 2011, 6:30-8:30 pmMcIntyre Medical Sciences Building, 1200 Pine Ave. W., Martin Theatre, 6th floorRegistration: call 514-398-4970 or send an email to annette.novak@mcgill.ca Visit: www.cancercentre.mcgill.ca

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